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# The Left Will Never Forgive Jews for October 7

They hate Jews for the massacre of October 7, cloaking their hate as righteousness: the alternative is facing the pure evil at the heart of their beloved community.

By Kathleen Hayes

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"Anti-Semitism is always a means rather than an end; it is a measure of the contradictions yet to be resolved. It is a mirror for the failings of individuals, social structures and State systems. Tell me what you accuse the Jews of—I'll tell you what you're guilty of."

This passage from Vasily Grossman's extraordinary novel *Life and Fate*, often quoted by Douglas Murray, may explain better than anything else how masses of people around the world, upon witnessing the most horrific slaughter of Jews since the Holocaust, could erupt to accuse not the Jews' killers, but the raped, kidnapped and tortured victims. Understanding is admittedly cold comfort when you're witnessing a level of depravity and hostility you wouldn't have dreamed possible—some of it maybe carried out by people you once respected, even people you thought were friends. But cold comfort is something.

What do the October 7 celebrants accuse the Jews of? Killing babies. Terror. Wanton cruelty. Rape. All gruesome crimes, all of which Hamas perpetrated against Israeli Jews, and others, on October 7. And the protesters' ultimate accusation—genocide—a goal Hamas inscribed in its founding charter, carried out to the best of its ability during its terror spree, and has vowed to finish. Indeed, tell me what you accuse the Jews of and I'll tell you what you're guilty of.

Yet we're left wondering *how* this happens. How do people—seemingly intelligent people who are not monsters—read in their New York Times or Facebook feeds about families in Israel being slaughtered, and come out euphoric—certain that what happened was not a pogrom, but righteous vengeance visited on an evil people? What kind of degeneracy accounts for this?

The rot has always been there, among those offering the most sweeping vision of human progress. It was there in the Enlightenment philosophes, such as Spinoza who assigned Jews the role of enemy of reason. And in Karl Marx, son of the Enlightenment, who claimed "moneygrubbing" is the Jewish essence and invoked "the emancipation of society from Judaism."

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universalism and denounced those unduly focused, as Rosa Luxemburg put it, on "special Jewish suffering." Socialists who raised concerns about modern-day antisemitism were said to be guilty of "philosemitism," a right-wing deviation. Above all, the luminaries of the socialist movement condemned support to Zionism, which was deemed reactionary. Socialist revolution, they insisted, would solve "the Jewish Question."

The failure of this dream has affected no people so tragically as the Jews. Oh, the revolution came all right, in Russia. Instead of liberating the Jews with the rest of humanity, 1917's aftermath brought massive pogroms in Ukraine, carried out by troops both for and against the Bolsheviks. Still the idealists insisted that what was needed was more revolution, to finish the job of sweeping away capitalism. When Hitler came to power vowing to exterminate "Judeobolshevism"—to hold the Jewish people accountable for the revolutionary threat—the Communist movement was largely unconcerned. After Hitler, us, Stalin said. The best and bravest insisted that Jews should not flee to Palestine, but remain in Europe to fight for socialist revolution.

That revolution did not come, but Auschwitz did. In their own way, often with the best of intentions and their beautiful, blinkered dogmas, they helped make the genocide perpetrated against the Jews —an actual genocide—possible.

I think this history plays a role in the antisemitism that has dominated the left since long before October 7. "The Germans will never forgive Jews for the Holocaust," it's been said—meaning, the Germans will never stop hating those who remind them of their guilt. Similarly, the left will never stop hating Jews for reminding them it was the Jewish people, above all, who paid the price of their grotesquely discredited vision.

Israel, a state largely founded by refugees fleeing oppression, including Holocaust survivors, is the ultimate reminder of the crimes visited on the Jewish people, and this is why it is hated. At first the left, for the most part, accepted Israel, even spoke of the Jewish right to self-determination. All that changed when the Israeli people had the effrontery in 1967 to not only defeat the latest attempt to destroy them, but win. This allowed the left to declare Israel, and the Jews, not a virtuous victim but an imperialist oppressor. The antisemitism that is now so shocking and visible had been percolating on the far left for over fifty years.

There's so much for progressives to gain from not knowing this history. In a Godless world, the left offers what the church once did: an essential feeling of community, of divinely ordained purpose, of

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women who share their most cherished beliefs and march at their side may be dearer to them than family. The thought of losing all this may feel equivalent to walking off a cliff.

So they hate Jews for the massacre of October 7, cloaking their hate as righteousness: the alternative is facing the pure evil at the heart of their beloved community. They cheer the terrorists as anti-imperialist "freedom fighters," tear down posters of kidnapped women as "Zionist propaganda." If some of the details make them squeamish, they deny the atrocities happened, while simultaneously proclaiming that if they did, the racist settler-colonialists deserved it, or else they did it to themselves. The awesome human capacity for invention is mobilized, putting a twenty-first century progressive sheen on that timeless program, the murder of Jews.

Of course, they do have a choice. They could dare to think for themselves, question their beliefs, challenge their peers and leading authorities. They could read one single book about antisemitism and ask themselves: Could this have something to do with today? They could check out a website about Zionism, or Israel, that isn't motivated by animus. They could actively seek truth and reject moral cowardice. They have those options, but they refuse to exercise them.

As for the rest of us, October 7, for all its pain, has brought real gifts: not only the clarity of difficult truths, but a deeper sense of community, newfound gratitude for the marvel that is Israel, and awe at its unassumingly heroic, life-affirming people. It's awakened many to the fact that this now year-long war is essential not only for Israel, but civilization itself. And with these newly opened eyes and solidarity, there's renewed hope.

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